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ABSTRACT

Compiled in this paper are samples of communication techniques that may be used to publicize and/or improve a school district's Title I dissemination activities. Suggestions are made for various publications a school might consider. These include newsletters, sample news releases, a news release form, progress reports, a school newspaper, a reading progress report, sample parent and Parent Advisory Council letters, and a sample of a teacher recommendation sheet for Title I reading programs. Tips on what to include and how to evaluate such publications are provided. (EB)

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Title I Communication Starter Kit

Especially for You . . . .

This Title I Communication Starter Kit has been developed for Local Title I Coordinators to share samples of communication techniques you may want to consider using in your school district's Title I dissemination activities.

Division of Compensatory Education
Kentucky Department of Education

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SUGGESTED TITLE I SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS

1. A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

"Title I News" is a publication for all parents of Title I students. One may be sent out in September after classes are underway and will contain information about intent of Title I. A second newsletter could be mailed during mid-year and could contain newsworthy articles. This second one could describe Title I activities plus give up-dated information. The third could be a questionnaire for evaluation purposes. The final Title I newsletter will be sent following year-end evaluation. Each newsletter could feature a reading activities for the home.

2. VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

This is another good way to reach the public. It is also a good means of keeping them informed about the Title I Program. This newsletter is planned for the volunteers who help with Title I Programs.

3. STAFF NEWSLETTER

Title I activities will be reported regularly in a staff newsletter which can be sent to all teachers. This is a good way to keep other staff informed of Title I activities.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

_____ County Schools' Title I Project is well underway for this school year. The Title I program is federally funded and is designed to meet the needs of educationally deprived children.

The program for this year has two components, Reading and Math. It also has a Migrant program in Reading and Math. The purpose of this program is to provide special help for students whose families move frequently.

According to test data, _____ County School children have improved over the last three years of 1.1 to 1.3 years of achievement gains in Reading, which exceeds what was expected. Last year's evaluation indicated a growth of one year and three months.

Children enrolled in the special Math program also show an average growth of over _____ years (evaluation) which exceeds what was expected.

The total Title I grant for _____ County for 1978-79 school year is $353,430.

There are a total of 898 students enrolled in special Reading classes and 275 enrolled in special Math.

Title I Staff

_____, Title I Coordinator; _____, Title I Secretary; _____, Psychometrist; and _____, Nurse.

from the XENIA CITY SCHOOLS

126 E. CHURCH ST., XENIA, OHIO 45385 532-372-4416

release date _____ time _____ released by _____

News Release Form (District Level)

FACT SHEET

Route:
1. Building Principal
2. Mr. Braunsdorf
3. Dr. Holub

TEACHER _____
GRADE _____
SCHOOL _____
DATE _____

WHO is this news release about?

WHAT is going to take place?

WHEN is this going to take place?

WHERE is this going to take place?

WHY?

HOW?

(Please attach photographs if possible.)

News Release Form

PUBLICATION TIPS

NEWSLETTERS AND NEWS RELEASES

Schools find themselves in the sometimes foreign world of the mass media when they begin to deal with newsmen or publish their own newsletters. A few basic facts, both serious and sarcastic, may make the journalistic enterprises of your school effective builders of understanding and support.

SCHOOL-TO-HOME NEWSLETTERS

Most schools publish regular newsletters to keep parents informed about school activities, problems and accomplishments. If ever there were any doubts about whether these newsletters are read, the opinion survey conducted in December 1972 in connection with the Concept 6 plan should dispel any such doubts.

The parents interviewed were asked from which single source they obtain most of their information about the R-1 schools. The replies: school publications, 41%; newspapers, 16%; students, 15%; parent meetings, 12%; general conversation, 8%; radio and television, 1%; other sources or don't know, 2%. And, asked the best way to get information on the Concept 6 proposal to the public, the four chief suggestions made were: school publications, 46%; newspapers, 24%; radio and television, 15%; community meetings, 13%.

Yes, school publications, such as local school and districtwide newsletters, are read! Principals are urged to send a newsletter home at least once a month. You may wish to have an elaborate newsletter, complete with photos or drawings. Or it may simply be a one-page mimeographed sheet. But the important thing is that it is published regularly. And, edited carefully. A sloppy newsletter filled with misspellings reflects directly on the quality of your school! Always have the newsletter proofread by a least two persons.

What type of school news interests the public? A nationwide poll conducted by George Gallup for CFK Ltd. found the most frequently-cited areas were:

> Curriculum innovations being introduced and why--college requirements--and the like. Significantly, there is a great interest in the very areas that most school publicity neglects--the content of courses and the educational process versus school operations.

One California school district advises:

> Send home notes explaining everything, not only to secure permission. Explain the value of field trips. The public might ask what are the children doing out of school. Tell parents about activities or programs in which their children take part, such as visits to museums, etc. Parents want to know why this trip is to be made, the method of transportation to be used, provisions made for the safety of the children, and how much time will be required and other details.

A few suggestions:

Do keep the articles brief and in layman's language (don't assume, for example, parents will know what modular scheduling, pod, resource center, etc., mean).

Do try and include a brief message each time from the principal.

Do use teachers' first names in the articles the first time the name is used. Make it "Miss Mary Smith, first grade teacher," instead of "Miss Smith, first grade teacher."

Don't load the newsletter with poems or articles by your students. They may make the parents of the author beam with pride, but they are likely to bore most other adults--especially men.

Do be sure to include a calendar of upcoming school events in which parents might be interested. This often will be the best-read part of your newsletter.

Do occasionally include brief summaries of what your classes are doing (this probably is more appropriate in elementary schools).

Do mimeograph your newsletter instead of using ditto copies if possible.

The following hints are from the Los Angeles City Schools' press relations handbook. Although many of them concern sending news releases to newspapers, they also contain good advice which applies to school newsletters:

> Since there are several stories you could send to papers, the problem often is one of selecting the best school stories to send.
>
> Sports events and certain other extracurricular activities usually will be easy to place in the local paper. But, it probably will be up to you to help the "education" story receive its proper emphasis by bringing such stories to the attention of your local newspaper people.
>
> Suggestions for stories might include:
>
> Student honors
> Graduations
> Citizen awards
> New teaching methods
> Staff honors
> Plays and musicals
> Scholarships
> New teachers
> Articles by staff members
> Retirements
> New equipment
> Unusual field trips
> Exhibits
> Science fairs
> Counseling programs
> Special classes

PROGRESS REPORTS--IN PRINT

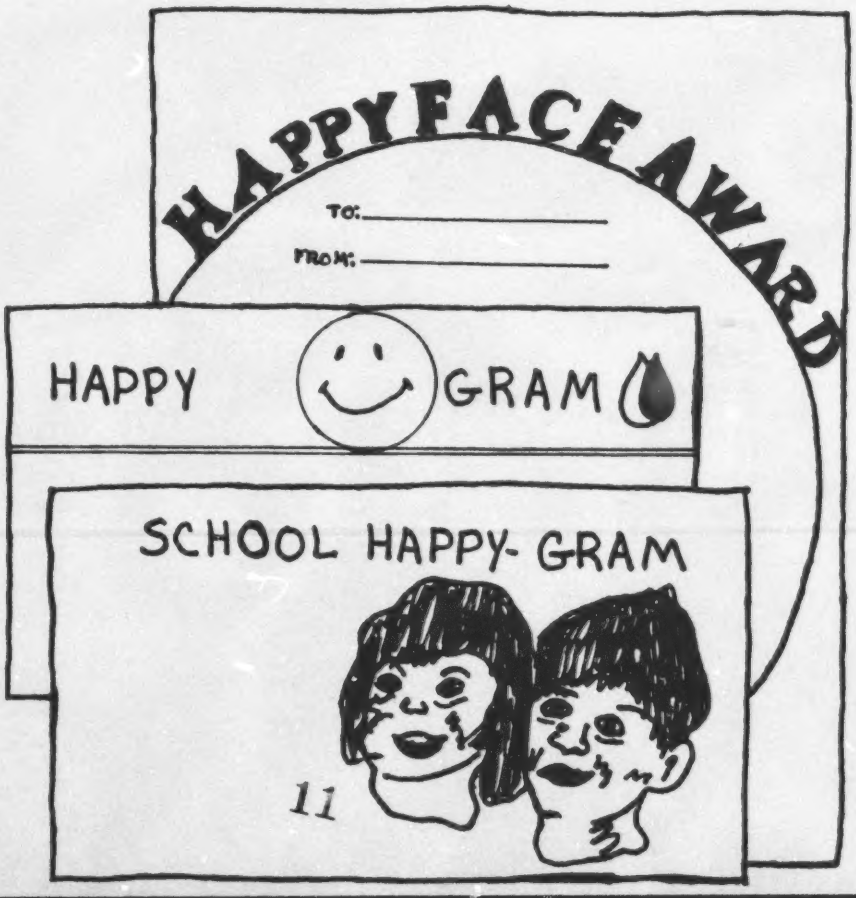
Many schools have adopted some simple form for communicating with parents about small daily accomplishments of their children. The name "Happy Gram" or "Glad Note" denotes the positive sort of message being sent home from school.

A "Happy Gram" box can be placed in the school office for the convenience of the teachers, and the school secretary will mail the notes to parents regularly.

Wording on the progress reports is arbitrary but indicates that a child has made some unusual contribution to his learning experience, has overcome a learning obstacle or has done something, no matter how seemingly insignificant, which warrants recognition from his school and his home.

The following montage of "Happy Gram" samples illustrates the variety of forms such printed messages to parents from teachers may take.

Often the progress of the entire school district is reported to parents in some form of printed newsletter or brochure. School calendars, budget, statistics about the schools--all can be communicated to parents on a regular basis, as well as information about school development, innovations and new programs throughout the district.



THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Many elementary schools send routine communications home with youngsters. How about continuing the procedure by developing elementary school newspapers tailored to each elementary building? Try a down home folksy sort of thing that lets the parents know what the kids are doing.

HOW-TO-DO-IT

1. The elementary principal is asked to select one teacher to coordinate the overall project and serve on a district-wide communication committee.

2. The teacher coordinator is the key person in recruiting the necessary news items for his or her colleagues.

3. With the help of the building principal the stories are written and pictures selected. The pictures were scheduled to be taken at the time of the event by the school photographer teacher coordinator, principal or PR director.

4. The news stories should be as simple and folksy as possible. Remember, you are not writing for a journal but reporting what the kids have been doing.

5. Use 8½" x 11" colored mimeo paper folded in half, forming 4 pages. Personalize the name of the paper by incorporating the name of the school in the title, such as The Monroe Doctrine, The Edison Express, Tonquish Tales, etc.

6. Relatively inexpensive plastic plates can be used for offset printing and the pre-screened pictures show up clearly and distinctly.

EVALUATING THE PUBLICATION

Most major commercial publications ask their readers to tell them how they are doing. This occasional checklist for readers may appear in one of the publications every six months or even more often.

The school communicator who sends any form of regular publication home to parents should ask them occasionally how he is doing, how the school looks to them through the windows of the publication. A form as simplified as this one will get the information the school public relations specialist should have at his fingertips: We have done this...and this is the result!

SCHOOL TALK

WE'RE INTERESTED IN YOUR OPINION!!

Please take another minute to tell us...

1. Have you received issues of the "School Talk" parent newsletter?

   _____ Yes _____ No

2. Have you had an opportunity to read them?

   _____ Yes _____ No

3. Do you think this newsletter is worthwhile?

   _____ Yes _____ No

4. What would you like to see in "School Talk" that is not covered?

   _____

5. What else can we do to improve our communication with you?

   _____

*Adapted from a questionnaire by the Anderson Elementary School, Grand Blanc, Michigan.

TITLE I, E.S.E.A.
School
City

MARCH
1978

Student

School

Dear Parent(s)

An additional program in Reading is being offered in the schools for children needing to improve their basic reading skills. This program is made possible by a grant from the Federal Government known as the Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act 1964.

Your child has been given the opportunity to participate in the program. All children in the program receive an extra thirty (30) minutes of instruction in using basic reading skills each day. Test results have shown that children participating in the program improve their reading skills.

You may contact the Principal about these school services, also, meetings for parents are being arranged in the schools. You are invited to attend. The dates will be announced later.

Yours truly,

John Jones
Title I Coordinator

cc: Bob Brown, Assistant Supt.
Principals

READING PROGRESS REPORT

KEY: "1" Means Has Mastery of This Skill
"2" Means Is Near Mastery of This Skill
"3" Means Is Having Difficulty With Skill

WORD ATTACK SKILLS

	Grading Period				
Visual Discrimination	2	3	4	5	6
Notices Likenesses and Differences					
Shapes					
Colors					
Letters and Numbers					
Words and Phrases					
Auditory Discrimination					
Listens for Likenesses and Differences					
Rhyming Words					
Rhyming Phrases					
Phonic Analysis					
Recognized and Reproduces					
Short Vowel Sounds					
Beginning Consonant					
Ending Consonant					
Consonant Blends (consonants with l and r)					
Consonant Blends (st, sk, sn, sp, sw, sn)					
Long Vowels					

	Grading Period				
Phonic Analysis	2	3	4	5	6
Vowel Generalizations					
Middle Vowel					
Final Vowel					
Silent e					
Two Vowels Together					
Long and Short oo					
Dipthongs					
Vowels +r; a+l; a+w					
Auditory Discrimination					
Common Consonant Digraphs (sh, ch, th)					
Consonant Digraphs (ch, nk, sh, ng, th, wh)					
Hard and Soft c and g					
Rhyming Elements					
Sight Vocabulary (50-100 words)					
Structural Analysis					
Compound Words					
Base Words and Endings					
Synonyms and Antonyms					
Possessives					
Contractions					

	Grading Period				
Structural Analysis (cont'd.)	2	3	4	5	6
Plurals (s, es)					
Base Words + Prefixes + Suffixes					
Plurals (irregular)					
Homonyms					
Chooses appropriate meaning of Words with Multiple Meanings					
Sight Vocabulary (100-175 words)					
Phonic Analysis					
Three Letter Consonant Blends					
Silent Letters					
Structural Analysis					
Syllabication					
Possessives					
Sight Vocabulary (170-240 words)					

These Word Attack Skills Are Listed In The Order In Which They Are Taught - This Is Simplest To Most Complex. Most Children Should Have Mastered These Skills By The End Of The Fourth Year Of School.

Dear Parent:

In an attempt to better inform you about your child's progress in school, we are now including a more specific report on how well your child is learning reading skills.

The skills listed here are those skills a child needs to have in order to figure out or sound out words. These skills are commonly referred to as phonic skills.

You may not be familiar with or understand some of the skills as they are listed. Please feel free to discuss them and your child's progress with his/her teacher.

Your child will be graded only on the skills that have been taught to him/her. If there is not a grade for a skill, then the child has not yet been instructed on that skill. A child usually will have learned all these skills by the end of their fourth year in school.

Again if you have any questions concerning your child, please feel free to ask about them.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

(Organizing Parent Advisory Councils)

Meetings Scheduled to Elect Title I School
Advisory Councils

Parents are a very important part of the Title I program in ___(county or district)___. A series of meetings to elect members for the School Advisory Councils is scheduled for April 5 through May 6 at local schools. A representative to serve on the District Advisory Council will be elected at that time from each school.

Title I is a federally funded Compensatory Education program designed for school children who are not working at the educational level that is appropriate for them, considering their age and grade level. Title I programs operated by the _____ Public School System for the 1978-79 school year include: Title I Kindergarten, Reading Plus, Programmed Tutoring Reading, Math Plus and Programmed Tutoring Math.

According to the new Title I Law, all parents of school age children in Title I attendance areas are invited to participate in the election of the Title I School Advisory Council. The majority of the members on the committee must be parents of children enrolled in Title I programs for the current school year. Anyone that is a resident of the school attendance area may be elected to serve on the School Advisory Council. If you wish to have your name placed on the election ballot, contact _____, Title I Coordinator, at ___(phone)___.

Advisory committee meetings will be held at the local schools beginning in September. According to _____, Director of Title I programs for the school, a schedule for future meetings will be planned at the first meeting. Information about future meetings will be published in the local papers or you may contact _____, Title I Coordinator.

Please come out and join us for our first meeting. If you need transportation to the meeting, feel free to call and let us know. Hope to see you at the meeting.

TITLE I, E.S.E.A.

MARCH
1 9 7 8

Ref:

TO: _____ Chairman
(SAC) School Parent Advisory Council

SCHOOL _____

Dear Chairman:

We have been advised that you were elected to serve as chairperson of the Title I SAC in your school. The Council is composed of ten (10) persons of which six (6) must be parents.

Each school, having Title I Programs must have School Advisory Councils in order to participate in the programs. The Council is to be elected by parents attending a meeting scheduled by the school principal. According to law, all parents having children enrolled in the Title I Programs, must be notified (1) that their child is eligible to take part in the programs and (2) of the time, date and place of the advisory council meetings in seven days of the meeting.

Currently, in our schools, we have two (2) Title I, E.S.E.A. Programs: (1) The regular Title I Reading Program and (2) The Migran. Title I Mathematics Program.

In accordance with Federal Guidelines, all project applications for three years, including the present application, is on file in the Principal's office. All Federal and State Regulations and State Department of Education Complaint Procedures are available to all parents and interested persons.

As chairman, you will be asked to open up meetings and preside over the meeting, usually there are two meetings yearly; conducted within the last two to three months of school. Also, you will be given assistance by the Principal, Title I Teacher, and Parent Volunteer Aide.

Due to the severe weather which caused the closing of schools, we are late in contacting our committee chairman.

The principal will advise you concerning the scheduling of meetings. I look forward to working with you in developing meaningful programs for Clark County children.

Yours truly,

Title I Coordinator

Phone

BUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TITLE I

Dear Parents,

We are starting a Captain's Reading Club and we would like your child to join. Here's how the club works.

Along with this letter are official reading coupons that you sign after your child reads to you or after you read to him. The coupon asks for five minutes or more of reading time. The coupons should be cut apart and returned to the classroom teacher daily as the contract is fulfilled. The child can get more coupons whenever they are needed. After 20 coupons are returned, your child will be given a Certificate of Addiction signed by the principal, myself, and you, stating that he has captured the Captain for 100 minutes and is hereby commended for establishing positive reading habits in the home. This certificate makes him a member of the Captain's 100 Minute Club. When this goal is reached, your child can start working toward membership in the 200 Minute Club, then the 300 Minute Club.

Only one coupon can be used per day but by no means do we limit the coupons to school days. We encourage you to spend at least 5 minutes reading with your child on Saturdays, Sundays and "snow days."

As you read with your child, first have him read to himself and then aloud. If a mistake is made, tell him the word. If the book is too hard, help your child find an easier one -- it is better to read an easier book and enjoy it than struggle over a difficult one. Daily reading increases interest, develops silent and oral reading skills and fosters self-responsibility.

What do you read together? Check out a library book, buy a magazine, or read a cereal box.

Get "hooked on reading." The 5 minutes you put in today will mean you are only 95 minutes from helping your child earn a certificate.

By actively participating in this reading club with your child, your child will feel that reading is important and will develop a positive reading habit. The success of this activity depends on your encouragement and cooperation. I thank you for your effort.

Sincerely,

Reading Skills Teacher

OFFICIAL READING COUPON

_____ has successfully read or was read to for 5 minutes or more today.

Date _____

_____
Parent's Signature

OFFICIAL READING COUPON

_____ has successfully read or was read to for 5 minutes or more today.

Date _____

_____
Parent's Signature

OFFICIAL READING COUPON

_____ has successfully read or was read to for 5 minutes or more today.

Date _____

_____
Parent's Signature

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Date _____

_____
Parent's Signature

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Date _____

_____
Parent's Signature

OFFICIAL READING COUPON

_____ has successfully read or was read to for 5 minutes or more today.

Date _____

_____
Parent's Signature

OFFICIAL READING COUPON

_____ has successfully read or was read to for 5 minutes or more today.

Date _____

_____
Parent's Signature

100 Minute Club

Let it be known that

_____

Has captured the Captain for 100 minutes and is hereby commended for establishing positive reading habits in the home and is certified as a member of the Captain's 100 Minute Club.

_____ Principal

_____ Reading Teacher

_____ Parent

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR HUMAN RELATIONS

1. Say less than you think, and cultivate a low but persuasive voice.

2. Make few promises but keep those you make regardless of the cost.

3. When praise is deserved, give it. When criticism is required, make it helpful and be sure to give it in private.

4. Learn to be interested in others, their homes and families, their joys and problems.

5. Don't inflict your problems on others. Learn to be cheerful -- and smile.

6. Live and let live -- keep an open mind, discuss rather than argue.

7. Say nothing about another person unless it is good. Gossip is destructive.

8. Avoid hurting others with wit and humor, so called at their expense.

9. When others make ill natured remarks about you, pay no attention. It is the gossiper, not you who is injured.

10. Study, observe, work untiringly, be patient.

In order to have a good friend -- be one.

Source Unknown

TEACHER RECOMMENDATION SHEET

TITLE I READING

Date _____

It is( ), is not( ) recommended that _____
(Child's Name)

participate in the Title I, ESEA Reading program for the following reason(s):

Check appropriate box(es):

☐ CTBS score not considered valid (Please explain below, using reliable date.)

☐ Test scores not available

☐ Child's classroom work indicates need for remediation

☐ Language deficiency

☐ Other

Comments:

_____
Teacher Signature

_____
Title I Teacher Signature